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AUTHORITY

AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (23 Mar 70)

FOR OT UT 701071

25 March 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 34th
General Support Group, Period Ending 31 January 1970

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 4b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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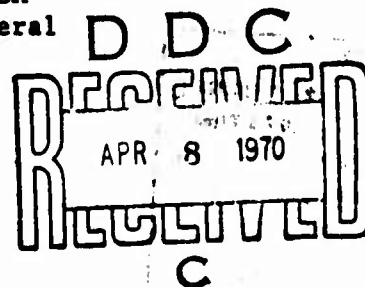
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34th General Support Group

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY MAJ Snipes/rap/923-4325
HEADQUARTERS, 34TH GENERAL SUPPORT GROUP (AM&S)
APO San Francisco 96309

AVGP-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

THRU: Commanding General
United States Army Vietnam
ATTN: AVHGC-DST
APO San Francisco 96375

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Section 1. Operations: Significant Activities

a. (U) MISSION: Provide Army aircraft maintenance and supply support (aircraft repair parts, avionics, and aircraft armament) to United States and other Free World Military Assistance Forces within Southeast Asia.

b. (U) OPERATIONS: (1) During the 92 day period of this report, the 34th General Support Group (Aircraft Maintenance and Supply) continued to provide combat service support to approximately 4,500 aircraft of the U.S. and other Free World Military Forces in South Vietnam. The number of flying hours for the theater fleet of aircraft remained at approximately the same level as the past six months - 280,000 hours. The total requirement for aircraft maintenance and supply support by the 34th GSG has not decreased since there has been no draw down of aircraft in-country even though the redeployment of U.S. Forces from RVN continued during this report period.

(2) In this connection, however, the 34th GSG lost the 303rd Transportation Company (GS) on 31 January 1970. The personnel were assigned to other units within the 34th GSG. This unit was deactivated in anticipation of further reductions of theater aviation units and to provide real estate for

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AVGF-B

15 February 1970

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other units. In addition, the 303rd would have had to move to another installation which would have resulted in a loss of approximately 90 days of production time. The mission of the 303rd was transferred to the 330th Transportation Company (GS) and the 539th Transportation Company (GS). The impact of the loss of the 303rd on aircraft operational readiness has not been realized at this early stage.

(3) The 34th GSG continued to function as an intersectional theater aviation logistics support unit under the USARV Aviation Officer, and on the same level of command as the major units in USARV. The advantages to this command position of the 34th GSG are:

(a) The Group Commander is able to survey the logistic support as required throughout the theater.

(b) The Group unit's mission can be changed as required by adding customers or deleting them as the tactical situation dictates.

(c) The Group provides uniform staff and command supervision throughout the theater.

(d) Aircraft and avionic assistance teams can be scheduled to support the needs of the theater and not be compartmented by the restrictions imposed by the various Field Forces and Division Commanders.

(e) As a major subordinate command of USARV, the Group Commander has the authority to converse, correspond or directly assist every major command in the theater.

(f) Most important, the Group has direct liaison and staff contact through "STOVEPIPE" to USAVSCOM and NICPS.

(g) Finally, the Group is capable of effective management of the theater aviation logistics through the control of the subordinate Aviation Materiel Management Center which has the Qui Nhon and Saigon Aviation Depots assigned.

(4) In the future development of doctrine governing the command and staff organization of theater aviation logistics, it would be well to consider the command arrangements of the 34th GSG as a model. The Group's success in the support of the 4,500 aircraft in this theater, while maintaining a low EDP rate, is due primarily to the command/staff relationship existing between the Group, USARV headquarters, and USAVSCOM.

(5) During the period, the return of repairable parts continued to be a problem that was difficult to resolve. Command action has been taken

AVGF-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

which should result in an improved program for the return of reparableables. USARV Supplement to AR 711-4.5 was published and implemented in October 1969. The supplement provided the general guidance necessary for the development of a repairable-return program. The Group appointed an officer as the Theater Aircraft Repairables Officer responsible for developing an automated program for control of reparableables. Concurrently, command emphasis was given to the need for prompt and expeditious return of reparableables. Three spot announcements over the AFWN stations throughout South Vietnam have been made; other announcements are under development. In addition, command emphasis has been given to need for developing positive direct unit-to-customer relationships stressing development of accounting methods. The successful voyage of the USNS Corpus Christi Bay (Floating Aircraft Maintenance Facility) (FAMF) up the coast of Vietnam during 12-18 November 1969, proved to be a tremendous asset of the reparableables program by bringing the overhaul facility to the customer. Results to date indicate that the rate of return of reparableables is increasing over that of the previous periods.

(6) The Group assisted the 1st INF DIV during redeployment activities by giving technical and supervisory help in the disposition of all aircraft and aviation related items. No major problems have been encountered during redeployment primarily due to lessons learned on the 9th INF DIV redeployment.

(7) Enemy activity during the period against subordinate units was light and had little adverse effect upon the operational mission.

c. (U) TRAINING: As of 31 January 1970, the following number of students graduated from the Army Aviation Refresher Training School (AARTS) during FY 69 and FY 70:

| <u>CLASS & LENGTH</u> | <u>FY 69</u> | <u>FY 70</u> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| AH-1G, UH-1C R/W Repair (2 wks) | 408 | 221 |
| UH-1D, H R/W Repair (2 wks) | 436 | 245 |
| OH-6A R/W Repair (2 wks) | 492 | 196 |
| CH-47 F/W Repair (3 wks) | 266 | 134 |
| CH-47 Maint & Troubleshooting (2 wks) | * | 130 |
| T-53-L-11 Engine (2 wks) | 324 | 89 |
| T-53-L-13 Engine (2 wks) | 396 | 230 |
| T-55-L-7 Engine (2 wks) | 252 | 65 |
| T-63 Engine (1 wk) | 324 | 184 |
| Armament Courses: | | |
| Course # 1 Officer (1 wk) | | |
| Enlisted (1 wk) | | |
| Course # 2 Officer (1 wk) | | |
| Enlisted (1 wk) | | |
| All Armament Courses | 339 | 328 |

AVGP-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

| <u>CLASS & LENGTH</u> | <u>FY 69</u> | <u>FY 70</u> |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Tech Inspector (3 wks) | * | 298 |
| Tech Supply (2 wks) | 341 | 270 |
| M4-35 Armament Subsystem (1 wk) | * | 29 |
| T-55-L-11 Engine (3 wks) | ** | 35 |
| Other *** | 561 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 4139 | 2414 |

* NEW COURSE

** DISCONTINUED

*** NON-SCHEDULED SPECIAL CLASSES

d. (U) ORGANIZATION: (1) The five general support and ten direct support companies within the 34th General Support Group were reorganized respectively under TO&E 55-458G and 55-457G on 1 December 1969.

(2) Effective 1 December 1969, four provisional avionics signal companies were discontinued and three Maintenance Companies (Light Equipment) were activated to provide general support avionics capability. An additional avionics maintenance company needed in the northern III Corps area was established using spaces from the three newly activated Maintenance Companies (Lt Equip) (GS) and the five general support aircraft maintenance and supply companies. Personnel from the following discontinued units were reassigned to the three new avionics companies and the new provisional avionics signal company:

2nd Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
8th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
19th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
69th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
143rd Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
203rd Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
241st Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
250th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
255th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
258th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
260th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
335th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)
458th Signal Det (Avionic Maint)

(3) Effective 1 December 1969, the newly established general support avionics companies are as follows:

(a) The 263rd Maintenance Company (Lt Equip) assigned to the 58th Transportation Battalion.

(b) The 317th Maintenance Company (Lt Equip) assigned to the 765th Transportation Battalion.

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AVGF-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operation Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

(c) The 614th Maintenance Company (Lt Equip) assigned to the 14th Transportation Battalion.

(d) Avel Central (Provisional) assigned to the 520th Transportation Battalion.

(4) The 303rd Transportation Company (AM)(GS), 765th Transportation Battalion (AM&S), was deactivated on 31 January 1970. On 15 January 1970, the stand down date, the company started deactivation activities to include diverting in-coming aircraft maintenance work orders to other 34th GSG units. Personnel from the 303rd were reassigned within 34th GSG to fill existing shortages. The 330th Transportation Company (AM)(GS) assumed the mission of the 303rd Transportation Company with no serious interruption of mission capability.

e. (FOUO) STRENGTH:

(1) The personnel strength of the Group on 31 January 1970 was:

| | <u>OFFICER</u> | <u>WARRANT OFFICER</u> | <u>ENLISTED</u> |
|------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Authorized | 246 | 158 | 4535 |
| Assigned | 234 | 130 | 4553 |

NOTE: Strength figures, excluding the 1st Transportation Battalion (Depot) (Seaborne) which is attached for operation control, reflect Program Six Civilization reductions.

(2) A civilian contract maintenance augmentation of 1,887 personnel is provided by Dynalectron Corporation, Lockheed Aircraft Service Company and Lear Siegler, Incorporated. These personnel are attached to each DS, GS and Avel Company within the 34th Group as well as division and non-divisional aviation and aviation support units providing an increased maintenance capability. Additionally, a complement of 39 Department of the Army Civilian personnel and 159 Field Service Representatives rendered aviation technical assistance to both organizational and DS/GS units throughout RVN.

f. (U) INFORMATION BRIEFING: During the reporting period, information briefings were presented to the following distinguished guests and visitors:

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>NAME</u> | <u>POSITION</u> |
|-------------|------------------------|--|
| 1 Nov | COL Thomas Nicholson | CO, 1st Cav Div Spt Cmd |
| 5 Nov | COL Benjamin S. Silver | Dep CMD for Logistics, USA Avn Spt Cmd |
| 26 Dec | COL John Bergner | CO, USAAMMC |

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AVGF-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>NAME</u> | <u>POSITION</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------|--|
| 10 Jan | B1 George W. Putnam Jr. | CG, 1st Avn Bde |
| 29 Jan | COL Kenneth D. Mertel | CO, 11th CAG, 1st Cav Div |
| 30 Jan | BG Jonathon R. Burton | Dep Dir for Logistics, Office of the JCS |

2. Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendation (U)

a. PERSONNEL: Need for Authorized Technical Inspectors.

(1) OBSERVATION: The command has only 50 percent of the authorized helicopter technical inspectors. Throughout the past year, the strength has never risen above 66 percent. Helicopter technical inspectors are used for quality control assurance in the maintenance of aircraft. They determine serviceability of aircraft parts and repairability of aircraft components.

(b) EVALUATION: The following action has been taken to help alleviate this problem:

1. A review of personnel records has been made and all personnel with any previous training as technical inspectors have been assigned this duty. In addition, OJT is provided selected personnel to qualify them as technical inspectors.

2. A letter has been forwarded to the Transportation School, Fort Eustis, VA, recommending that the field be made more attractive by increasing the grade structure for the MOS. One possibility mentioned was to add grades E-8 and E-9 to the TI field.

3. The enlisted assignment branch at Headquarters, USARV, is advised on the status of each critical MOS by written and verbal reports.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: 1. That USARV make this critical shortage a matter of record with USCONARC and Department of the Army.

2. That DA make a comprehensive study to determine why there is a continual short fall of technical inspectors.

3. That the study determine what action must be taken to increase the output of trained technical inspectors to alleviate the shortage as soon as possible.

b. OPERATIONS: Need for Trained Maintenance Test Pilots.

(a) OBSERVATION: The ORILL from the 520th Transportation Battalion, dated 30 September 1968, reported a serious shortage of trained maintenance test pilots.

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AVGF-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

This problem has not been corrected and is causing difficulty as the number of supported aircraft increase in theater. The CONUS training program appears to be inadequate to fulfill world wide requirements. Aviation units here are being assigned aviators with little or no experience in aircraft maintenance. For maintenance units, this is especially critical since field experience or school training is needed to produce a competent maintenance test pilot. There is only one flight period devoted to maintenance test flights in the Aircraft Maintenance Officer's course. It is left to the unit in Vietnam to train the majority of aviators in proper test flight procedures which detracts substantially from their primary mission.

(b) EVALUATION: The following chart indicates the current need for test pilots. The figures are based on one test pilot for each company sized unit or higher having direct or general support capabilities or requirements:

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>TEST PILOTS REQUIRED</u> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 34th General Support Group | 16 |
| Divisional Aviation Units | 57 |
| Divisional DS Maintenance Units | 11 |
| 1st Aviation Brigade | <u>76</u> |
| TOTAL | 160 |

There is an excellent source from the CONUS training base of highly qualified maintenance test pilots. This output comes from Phase II of the Aircraft Maintenance Officer's course at Fort Eustis, VA. Phase II is a highly selective sub-course and only experienced aviators, many of whom are field grade, are allowed to attend. At present there are seventy (70) graduates of this sub-course in Vietnam. Of these, many are being utilized in command or staff positions and their skills as test pilots are rarely utilized. A deficiency of approximately ninety (90) trained maintenance test pilots exist in Vietnam.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: That Phase II of the Aircraft Maintenance Officer's course be expanded to include all aviator graduates of Phase I.

c. TRAINING. NONE.

d. INTELLIGENCE. NONE.

e. LOGISTICS:

(1) Radio Frequency Radiation Hazards, Aircraft Ammunition.

(a) OBSERVATION: 1. The United States Navy Report of an inadvertent firing of a 2.75 Aerial Rocket was the basis of a 34th General Support Group investigation which included detailed technical discussions with the Naval Weapons Laboratory in CONUS. Their data sheets on the Radio Frequency (RF) hazards to ammunition were utilized to prepare recommendations. As a result

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AVGF-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

of this liaison, a USARV meeting was coordinated through the Aviation Logistics Division (AVHAV-LOG) to present the problem to the USARV staff.

2. Since this meeting, at least two incidents have occurred in which RF radiation is a positive suspect. One involved the launch of two 2.75 rockets from a UH-1C Helicopter operated by the 235th Assault Helicopter Company in Can Tho. This incident destroyed an ammunition dump, killed one soldier and wounded two others. The second incident occurred on 12 January 1970, at Phu Loi, in the 1st Aviation Battalion. This incident involved an AH-1G Helicopter which launched a rocket and destroyed a UH-1C Helicopter, as well as wounding one crewman. It has not yet been determined if this incident was due to static electricity or RF Radiation.

(b) EVALUATION: Though most aviation personnel have seen or heard of such incidents, few formal reports have been made. This accounts for the lack of recorded data on this problem. As a result of our efforts in this area, United States Army Munitions Command (MUCOM) has published precautionary measures to be observed in the handling of 20mm ammunition. In addition, MUCOM and the 2.75 Aerial Rocket Project Manager's Office are initiating test programs to evaluate current equipment design and technical manual procedures for handling of aircraft ammunition. Picatinny Arsenal and the Naval Laboratory are participating in this effort which should produce data upon which sound operating procedures can be based.

The investigation has highlighted the difficulty of convincing tactical personnel of the dangers associated with this phenomenon. Commanders appear reluctant to accept any restrictions on their operation which are not based on visible problems. Each accidental firing was attributed to "a short in the aircraft wiring", or pilot error. The common reaction is that if the commander hasn't heard of the problem in the past, it must not be very important.

It was determined that the radiation hazard at any location could be accurately determined by a Radiation Survey Team. One such team is available at MACV and consists of Air Force Technicians from Wright-Patterson Air Base, Dayton, Ohio. A typical survey was accomplished at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Saigon, which revealed several possible hazards to low flying helicopters loaded with 2.75 inch rockets or 20mm ammunition.

(c) RECOMMENDATION: United States Army Vietnam Aviation Logistics Division is currently developing procedures for the handling of 2.75 inch rockets and 20mm ammunition in a hazardous environment. These procedures will incorporate information received from both MUCOM and the Naval Weapons Laboratory. Because the 20mm ammunition is especially sensitive and has only recently been available to our tactical units, emphasis will be placed on this item to insure proper handling. Although the published procedures will be more detailed, they will generally consist of the following:

1. Do not load or unload rockets or 20mm ammunition from aircraft unless

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AVGF-B

15 February 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

the firing pod cables are connected and the ship is adequately grounded to a ground stake which has been electrically tested.

2. Do not handle or store this type of ammunition in the vicinity of high frequency radio or radar equipment. The AN/TPN-8 control radar is both the most commonly found item and the most dangerous. If doubt exists as to safe distances, a survey may be requested from the MACV Radio Frequency Control Team.

3. All aviators and support personnel should be made aware of this problem and the preventive measures which have been or are being developed. Commanders must be convinced of the seriousness of this problem and must monitor their tactical operations to insure the safety of their troops.

(2) Increase in Maintenance Down Time Due to Corrosion.

(a) OBSERVATION: Corrosion to Army aircraft is becoming an ever increasing problem.

(b) EVALUATION: The impact of corrosion became apparent when a RU-8 and a U-21 aircraft were corroded to the extent that replacement of skin panels was necessary. One aircraft, a RU-8D which had been operated primarily in areas of salt water near Da Nang and Chu Lai, required evacuation to Clark A.B. Philippines, for extensive treatment of corrosion. A second reason for the extensive treatment was that the relief tube located directly under the cockpit area evacuated refuse along the entire undercarriage of the aircraft causing extensive corrosion of the Doppler Antenna system. This required removal of large skin sections so that corrosion of bulkheads, longerons and skin could be treated.

The U-21 aircraft, operated mostly in the Delta region and along coastal areas, required extensive sheetmetal and structural repair to arrest the corrosion. OH-6 aircraft operating around Chu Lai, Da Nang, Nha Trang, and Qui Nhon have experienced extensive corrosion on Magnesium and alloy parts of the rotor system and swashplate. Corrosion is caused by salt water, dirt and lack of adequate cleaning facilities for preventive maintenance.

Most corrosion can be traced to the environment within which aircraft fly and lack of preventive maintenance; i.e., washing and frequent inspection for corrosion.

(c) RECOMMENDATIONS: 1. Recommend that Army Technical Manuals be written dealing with corrosion prevention, inspection and treatment.

2. Recommend that either an Army school be initiated or an ISSA negotiated with the Air Force for Army personnel to attend the Air Force Corrosion Control School at Clark A.B., Philippines or Kadena A.B., Okinawa.

AVGF-B

15 February 1970

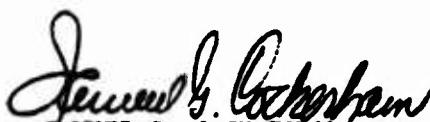
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for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RJS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

3. Section 3. Headquarters, Department of the Army Survey Information (U)

Information required by USARV letter AVHGC-DST, subject: Operations Report-
Lessons Learned: Escape and Evasion Information, dated 6 August 1968, is
negative.

1 Incl

1. Organizational Chart



SAMUEL G. COCKERHAM

Colonel, TC
Commanding

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AVHGC-DST (26 Feb 70) 1st Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 963752 7 FEB 1970

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPDP-DT,
APO 96558

Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned
for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1970 from Headquarters, 34th
General Support Group.

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning need for authorized technical inspectors,
page 6, paragraph 2a; concur. The shortage of helicopter technical
inspectors has been addressed to Department of Army at frequent intervals
during the past several months. This information is also included as a
part of critical MOS lists and emergency requisitions which reflect
USARV's shortage of helicopter technical inspectors.

b. Reference item concerning need for trained maintenance test
pilots, page 6, paragraph 2b; concur. The requirement that every officer
graduate of the Aircraft Maintenance Officer's Course be a qualified test
pilot on graduation from the formal course of instruction is considered
valid. Limiting the input for Phase II to only highly experienced
aviators clearly does not provide the requisite test pilot training that
all aircraft maintenance officers must have in order to adequately
perform in the field. Consideration should be given to combining Phase
I and II into one course of instruction for all aviators attending the
Aircraft Maintenance Officer's Course.

c. Reference item concerning radio frequency radiation hazards,
aircraft ammunition, page 7, paragraph 2e(1); concur. Based on information
provided by MUCOM that the possibility of accidental initiation of electri-
cally primed 20 mm and 2.75 FFAR ammunition through accumulated static
electricity or induced voltage in the presence of RF fields exist, Hq
USARV dispatched a message on 25 Jan 70 specifying detailed procedures
to be used in the handling, loading, unloading, and storage of 20mm
ammunition. A similar message is being prepared concerning 2.75 FFAR
ammunition. Additionally, on 20 Feb 70, Hq USARV dispatched a message
to all units, specifying the procedures to be used concerning the
static grounding of armed aircraft.

AVHGC-DST (26 Feb 70) 1st Ind

27 FEB 1970

SUBJECT: Operational Report of Headquarters, 34th General Support Group
for Period Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

d. Reference item concerning increase in maintenance down time due to corrosion, page 8, paragraph 2e(2); concur. That portion of the recommendation concerning the development of technical manuals should be addressed by Department of Army. Hq USARV is investigating the programs of instruction offered by the USAF schools cited to determine if they are applicable to USARV requirements. Quotas for USARV personnel to attend these schools will be requested if the courses are relevant to USARV needs. The 34th General Support Group will be informed by letter as to the results of the present inquiry.

FOR THE COMMANDER



C. E. MICHELS

MAJ, AGC

Assistant Adjutant General

Cy Furn:
34th General Support Group

GPOP-DT (15 Feb 70) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 34th General Support Group for Period
Ending 31 January 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558

2 MAR 70

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

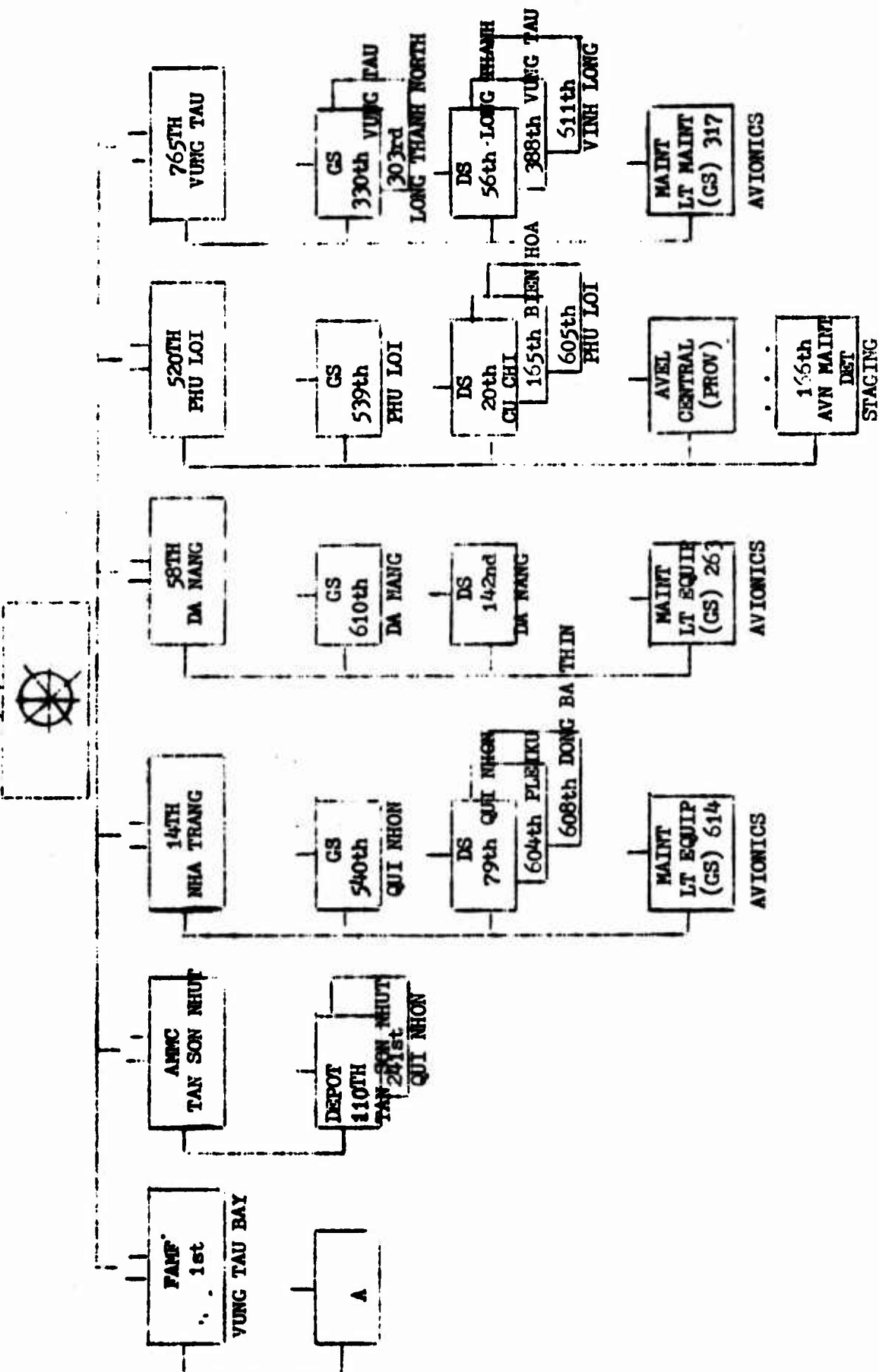
This headquarters concurs in subject report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

C. L. Shortt
to

C. L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

34TH CSG (AM&S) TAN SON NHUT



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| DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| (Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified) | | |
| 1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author) | | 2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION |
| HQ, OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310 | | FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY |
| | | 2b. GROUP |
| 3. REPORT TITLE | | |
| Operational Report - Lessons Learned, HQ, 34th General Support Group | | |
| 4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates) | | |
| Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 Nov 69 to 31 Jan 70. | | |
| 5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name) | | |
| CO, 34th General Support Group | | |
| 6. REPORT DATE | 7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES | 7b. NO. OF REFS |
| 15 February 1970 | 17 | |
| 8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO. | 8b. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) | |
| b. PROJECT NO. N/A | 701071 | |
| c. | 9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report) | |
| d. | | |
| 10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT | | |
| | | |
| 11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES | 12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY | |
| N/A | OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310 | |
| 13. ABSTRACT | | |
| 15 | | |

DD FORM 1473
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UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification